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21 March 1962

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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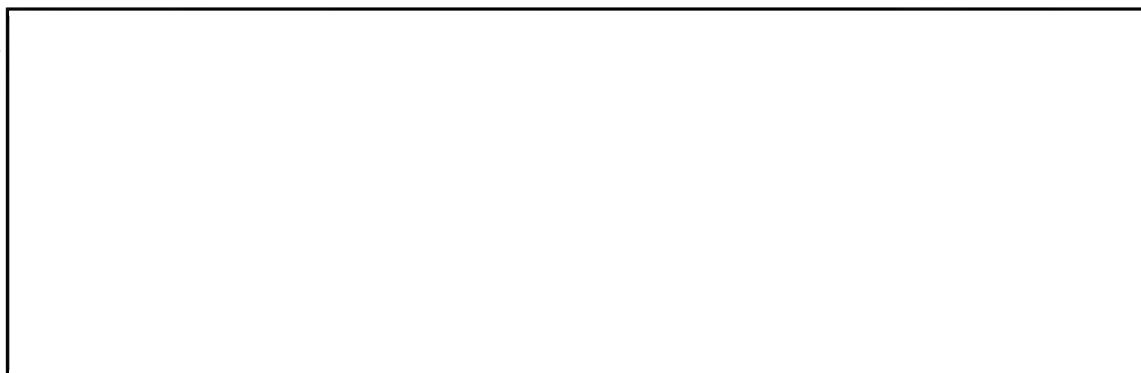
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*East Germany: The East Germans apparently are preparing to extend to West German visitors to East Berlin the same customs controls now exercised over foreign nationals who enter via Friedrichstrasse, the only international crossing point. Non-Germans are required to present passports and submit to currency and immunization controls on entering and leaving East Berlin. At the present time West Germans entering East Berlin are required only to show personal identity cards. On the late afternoon of 19 March construction crews dismantled the concrete, slalom-type barriers behind the wall at the Heinrich Heine Strasse (Prinzenstrasse) crossing point--one of two crossing points reserved for use by the West Germans. The removal of slalom barriers at Friedrichstrasse on 6 March preceded by 24 hours the imposition of currency controls. An East German police official reportedly told onlookers that the barriers at Heinrich Heine Strasse would be replaced by control "ramps." These presumably would funnel incoming and outgoing traffic to sheds erected at this site last December. There have been no indications of comparable activity at Bornholmerstrasse, the other West German crossing point.

A new East German customs law was introduced in the legislature on 24 January. Although this law lacks final approval it could be promulgated at any time by executive decree. [redacted]

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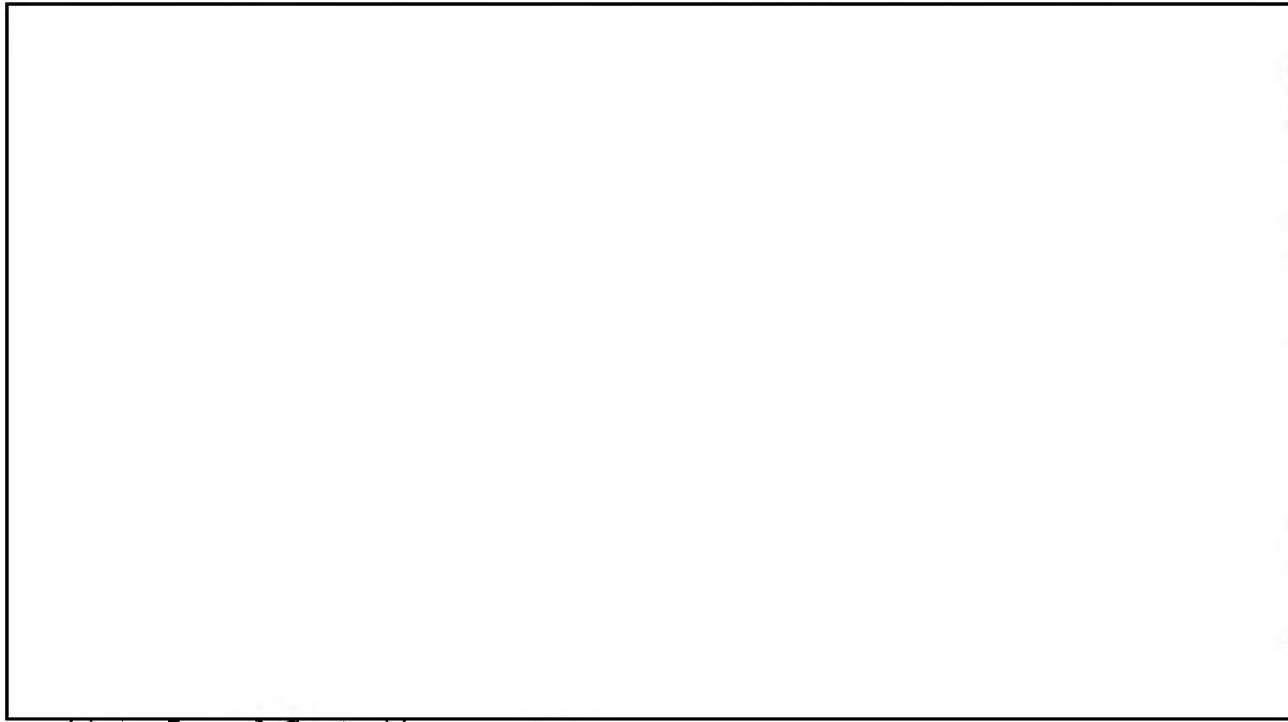
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Israel-Syria: Two more firing incidents on Lake Tiberias involving Israeli fishing craft, patrol boats, and Syrian shore batteries occurred on 20 March. The Israelis are determined to continue fishing near Syrian territory, and the Syrians apparently are equally determined to fire on the Israeli boats, as they did in the incidents which led up to Israel's reprisal raids on 16-17 March.

In Damascus, where the clashes on 16-17 March are being celebrated as a "victory," Prime Minister Dawalibi has emphasized to Ambassador Knight the "gravity of the present crisis," which involves Israel's plans for diversion of Jordan River waters. He said it was not a "technical question" of how much water Israel may divert, but a political one. The Arabs deny that Israel has any "rights" at all to the Jordan River waters. The ambassador had the impression that Dawalibi feels himself under political pressure and is "somehow on the spot!"

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*Argentina: (information as of 0400 EST) President Frondizi still faces the possibility of a military coup, but late yesterday gained at least a breathing spell through a tentative agreement with military leaders who were demanding his resignation. This agreement, details of which apparently remain to be negotiated, reportedly calls for formation of a coalition cabinet including military representatives, strong measures against the Peronistas and Communists, and the rapid ouster from government posts of supporters of Rogelio Frigerio, Frondizi's controversial adviser. Early today Frondizi announced that all eight members of his cabinet had resigned and that he and the military would each appoint four replacements.

Earlier yesterday Frondizi told Ambassador McClintock that he intended to reject a military demand that the 43 Peronistas elected to the Chamber of Deputies on 18 March be barred from taking their seats on 1 May as scheduled. Such action, he said, would be illegal, in contrast with the federal takeover in several provinces, which the constitution allows under a state of siege such as now exists. Frondizi said he believed that seating the Peronistas in the 192-member Chamber would lessen the chances of Peronista violence which the military could use as a pretext for a coup. Although the threat of Peronista violence remains, Peronista labor leaders yesterday voted against calling a general strike pending receipt of orders from

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Peron in Spain as well as clarification of the government's intent on allowing Peronistas to take office on 1 May.

Negotiations between Frondizi and the military on specific points in their tentative agreement, particularly those concerning the Peronista deputies, will be difficult and could rekindle the crisis. Frondizi yesterday stalled off the demands for his resignation by emphasizing the need for constitutional government. However, there is still considerable sentiment within the armed forces for imposition of a military government, and a determined bid for power by almost any prominent officer could meet with success.

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Situation Report--Ethiopia:

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The Emperor has failed to make any meaningful concessions to demands for administrative reform by representatives of this small but growing class of educated people. Instead, he presumably intends to continue his authoritarian regime by playing off rival reactionary and moderate factions against each other. There are rumors of pending cabinet changes involving the ministers of defense and interior. Meanwhile, Ethiopia's relations with the neighboring Somali Republic remain difficult, with tribal incidents along the frontier and continued fear in Addis Ababa that Somali propaganda will have considerable appeal to Ethiopia's large Moslem minority.

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Situation Report: Ethiopia

The Emperor has been supported by four groups: the aristocracy, the army, the Coptic Church, and the provincial leaders. However, since World War II, a new element--young, largely foreign-educated Ethiopians--has gained increasing strength in middle-grade military and civil administration circles. This group of some 1,000 persons is the functioning core of Ethiopia's administrative and military establishments; it also is the moving spirit behind coup plotters who want to speed the empire's modernization. However, the army's top command and enlisted ranks are probably loyal to the Emperor and not likely to join in a coup effort unless they consider the dumping of Haile Selassie necessary to preserve the country's unity and to keep the ruling classes in power. A prolonged struggle among ruling Christian political factions would afford potential dissident groups such as Eritreans and Moslem Somalis an opportunity to try secessionist activities.

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